



# News Release

## IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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### **USGS and IDWR to Perform Mass Measurement of Ground Water Levels in the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer**

Beginning next week employees of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) working under contract to the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) will conduct a large scale measurement of well ground water levels in the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA).

The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the status of the aquifer and provide water resource managers with the vital information needed to evaluate the current condition of the aquifer. The ground water study will also document seasonal changes in ground water levels and how they compare to past years.

Between Mar. 31 and Apr. 11, personnel from the USGS and IDWR will be in the study area measuring the depth to water in more than 1,300 wells. IDWR is engaged in an ongoing effort to update and improve its aquifer model. As part of this effort, IDWR will conduct mass water level measurements prior to and after the irrigation season once every five years.

“The mass measurement is like taking a snap shot in time of the current state of the ESPA. The resulting data provides a baseline for assessing water level changes and facilitates improvement of the aquifer model,” said IDWR Hydrology Section Manager Sean Vincent.

The USGS employee will carry official government identification as well as a letter from IDWR. The USGS representatives will spend a few minutes asking questions about any changes the owner has made to the well or pump since the last measurement, how long it has been since the well was last pumped and other questions that are pertinent to each site.

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The USGS representative will then measure the water level in the well using a steel tape or an electronic water level meter and will report the results to the well owner.

IDWR and USGS field personnel will also measure streams and creeks, and survey land surface elevations at selected sites in the weeks following the mass measurement of ground water levels.

The USGS and IDWR would greatly appreciate well owners' cooperation in the study by granting them access to their wells. Privately owned wells are a valuable source of information. The more wells that information can be gathered from, the better the assessment of the current state of the aquifer.

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